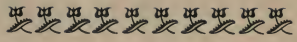

LIONEL JOHNSON

XXI POEMS

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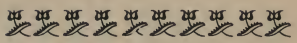

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XXI POEMS
LIONEL JOHNSON

TWENTY-ONE POEMS WRITTEN BY LIONEL JOHNSON: SELECTED BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

PORTLAND MAINE
THOMAS B MOSHER
MDCCCCVIII

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XXI POEMS

These *Twenty-one Poems* were selected by William Butler Yeats from *Poems* (1895) and *Ireland and other Poems* (1897) and issued in a limited edition of 220 copies by Elizabeth Corbet Yeats at the Dun Emer Press, Dublin, Ireland (1904).

The *Seven Additional Poems* are of our own choosing, in the belief that a more adequate presentation of Johnson's lyrical gifts is thus made possible than by an arbitrary restriction to twenty-one pieces only.

T. B. M.

MYSTIC AND CAVALIER

O from me: I am one of those,
who fall.
What! hath no cold wind swept
your heart at all,
In my sad company? Before
the end,
Go from me, dear my friend!

Yours are the victories of light: your feet
Rest from good toil, where rest is brave and sweet.
But after warfare in a mourning gloom,
I rest in clouds of doom.

Have you not read so, looking in these eyes?
Is it the common light of the pure skies,
Lights up their shadowy depths? The end is set:
Though the end be not yet.

When gracious music stirs, and all is bright,
And beauty triumphs through a courtly night;
When I too joy, a man like other men:
  Yet, am I like them, then?

And in the battle, when the horsemen sweep
Against a thousand deaths, and fall on sleep:
Who ever saw that sudden calm, if I
  Sought not? Yet, could not die.

Seek with thine eyes to pierce this crystal sphere:
Canst read a fate there, prosperous and clear?
Only the mists, only the weeping clouds:
  Dimness, and airy shrouds.

Beneath, what angels are at work? What powers
Prepare the secret of the fatal hours?
See! the mists tremble, and the clouds are stirred:
  When comes the calling word?

The clouds are breaking from the crystal ball,
Breaking and clearing: and I look to fall.
When the cold winds and airs of portent sweep,
  My spirit may have sleep.

O rich and sounding voices of the air!
Interpreters and prophets of despair:
Priests of a fearful sacrament! I come,
  To make with you mine home.

TO MORFYDD

A VOICE on the winds,
A voice by the waters,
Wanders and cries:
Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes!

Western the winds are,
And western the waters,
Where the light lies:
Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes!

Cold, cold, grow the winds,
And wild grow the waters,
Where the sun dies:
Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes!

And down the night winds,
And down the night waters,
The music flies:

Oh! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Cold be the winds,
And wild be the waters,
  So mine be your eyes!

GLORIES

ROSES from Paestan rosaries!
More goodly red and white was she:
Her red and white were harmonies,
Not matched upon a Paestan tree.

Ivories blaunched in Alban air!
She lies more purely blaunched than you:
No Alban whiteness doth she wear,
But death's perfection of that hue.

Nay! now the rivalry is done,
Of red, and white, and whiter still:
She hath a glory from that sun,
Who falls not from Olympus hill.

TO MORFYDD DEAD

MORFYDD at midnight
Met the Nameless Ones:
Now she wanders on the winds,
White and lone.
I would give the light
Of eternal suns,
To be with her on the winds,
No more lone!

Oh, wild sea of air!
Oh, night's vast sweet noon!
We would wander through the night,
Star and star.
Nay! but she, most fair!
Sun to me and moon:
I the vassal of her flight,
Far and far.

Morfydd at midnight
Met the Nameless Ones:
Now she wanders on the winds,
White and lone.
Take from me the light,
God! of all Thy suns:
Give me her, who on the winds
Wanders lone!

A FRIEND

ALL, that he came to give,
He gave, and went again:
I have seen one man live,
I have seen one man reign,
With all the graces in his train.

As one of us, he wrought
Things of the common hour:
Whence was the charmed soul brought,
That gave each act such power;
The natural beauty of a flower?

Magnificence and grace,
Excellent courtesy:
A brightness on the face,
Airs of high memory:
Whence came all these, to such as he?

Like young Shakespearian kings,
He won the adoring throng:
And, as Apollo sings,
He triumphed with a song:
Triumphed, and sang, and passed along.

With a light word, he took
The hearts of men in thrall:
And, with a golden look,
Welcomed them, at his call
Giving their love, their strength, their all.

No man less proud than he,
Nor cared for homage less;
Only, he could not be
Far off from happiness:
Nature was bound to his success.

Weary, the cares, the jars,
The lets, of every day:
But the heavens filled with stars,
Chanced he upon the way:
And where he stayed, all joy would stay.

Now, when sad night draws down,
When the austere stars burn:
Roaming the vast live town,
My thoughts and memories yearn
Toward him, who never will return.

Yet have I seen him live,
And owned my friend, a king:
All that he came to give,
He gave: and I, who sing
His praise, bring all I have to bring.

BY THE STATUE OF KING CHARLES AT CHARING CROSS

SOMBRE and rich, the skies;
Great glooms, and starry plains.
Gently the night wind sighs;
Else a vast silence reigns.

The splendid silence clings
Around me: and around
The saddest of all kings
Crowned, and again discrowned.

Comely and calm, he rides
Hard by his own Whitehall:
Only the night wind glides:
No crowds, nor rebels, brawl.

Gone, too, his Court: and yet,
The stars his courtiers are:
Stars in their stations set;
And every wandering star.

Alone he rides, alone,
The fair and fatal king:
Dark night is all his own,
That strange and solemn thing.

Which are more full of fate:
The stars; or those sad eyes?
Which are more still and great:
Those brows; or the dark skies?

Although his whole heart yearn
In passionate tragedy:
Never was face so stern
With sweet austerity.

Vanquished in life, his death
By beauty made amends:
The passing of his breath
Won his defeated ends.

Brief life, and hapless? Nay:
Through death, life grew sublime.
Speak after sentence? Yea:
And to the end of time.

Armoured he rides, his head
Bare to the stars of doom:
He triumphs now, the dead,
Beholding London's gloom.

Our wearier spirit faints,
Vexed in the world's employ:
His soul was of the saints;
And art to him was joy.

King, tried in fires of woe!
Men hunger for thy grace:
And through the night I go,
Loving thy mournful face.

Yet, when the city sleeps;
When all the cries are still:
The stars and heavenly deeps
Work out a perfect will.

SANCTA SILVARUM

THROUGH the fresh woods there fleet
Fawns, with bright eyes, light feet:
Bright eyes, and feet that spurn
The pure green fern.

Headed by leaping does,
The swift procession goes
Through thickets, over lawns:
Followed by fawns.

Over slopes, over glades,
Down dells and leafy shades,
Away the quick deer troop:
A wildwood group.

Under the forest airs,
A life of grace is theirs:
Courtly their look; they seem
Things of a dream.

Some say, but who can say?
That a charmed troop are they:
Once youths and maidens white!
These may be right.

LUCRETIUS

LUCRETIUS! King of men, that are
No more, they think, than men:
Who, past the flaming walls afar,
Find nought within their ken:

The cruel draught, that wildered thee,
And drove thee upon sleep,
Was kinder than Philosophy,
Who would not let thee weep.

Thou knowest now, that life and death
Are wondrous intervals:
The fortunes of a fitful breath,
Within the flaming walls.

Without them, an eternal plan,
Which life and death obey:
Divinity, that fashions man,
Its high, immortal way.

Or was he right, thy past compare,
Thy one true voice of Greece?
Then, whirled about the unconscious air,
Thou hast a vehement peace.

No calms of light, no purple lands
No sanctuaries sublime :
Like storms of snow, like quaking sands,
Thine atoms drift through time.

SERTORIUS

BEYOND the straits of Hercules,
Behold! the strange Hesperian seas,
A glittering waste at break of dawn:
High on the westward plunging prow,
What dreams are on thy spirit now,
Sertorius of the milk-white fawn?

Not sorrow, to have done with home!
The mourning destinies of Rome
Have exiled Rome's last hope with thee:
Nor dost thou think on thy lost Spain.
What stirs thee on the unknown main?
What wilt thou from the virgin sea?

Hailed by the faithless voice of Spain,
The lightning warrior come again,
Where wilt thou seek the flash of swords,
Voyaging toward the set of sun?
Though Rome the splendid East hath won,
Here thou wilt find no Roman lords.

No Tingis here lifts fortress walls;
And here no Lusitania calls;
What hath the barren sea to give?

Yet high designs enchaunt thee still;
The winds are loyal to thy will:
Nor yet art thou too tired, to live.

No trader thou, to northern isles,
Whom mischief-making gold beguiles
To sunless and unkindly coasts:
What spirit pilots thee thus far
From the tempestuous tides of war,
Beyond the surging of the hosts?

Nay! this thy secret will must be.
Over the visionary sea,
Thy sails are set for perfect rest:
Surely thy pure and holy fawn
Hath whispered of an ancient lawn,
Far hidden down the solemn West.

A gracious pleasaunce of calm things;
There rose-leaves fall by rippling springs:
And captains of the older time,
Touched with mild light, or gently sleep,
Or in the orchard shadows keep
Old friendships of the golden prime.

The far seas brighten with gray gleams:
O winds of morning! O fair dreams!
Will not that land rise up at noon?

There, casting Roman mail away,
Age long to watch the falling day,
And silvery sea, and silvern moon.

Dreams! for they slew thee: Dreams! they lured
Thee down to death and doom assured:
And we were proud to fall with thee.
Now, shadows of men we were,
Westward indeed we voyage here,
Unto the end of all the sea.

Woe! for the fatal, festal board:
Woe! for the signal of the sword,
The wine-cup dashed upon the ground:
We are but sad, eternal ghosts,
Passing far off from human coasts,
To the wan land eternal bound.

CELTIC SPEECH

NEVER forgetful silence fall on thee,
Nor younger voices overtake thee,
Nor echoes from thine ancient hills forsake thee;
Old music heard by Mona of the sea:
And where with moving melodies there break thee
Pastoral Conway, venerable Dee.

Like music lives, nor may that music die,
Still in the far, fair Gaelic places:
The speech, so wistful with its kindly graces,
Holy Croagh Patrick knows, and holy Hy:
The speech, that wakes the soul in withered faces,
And wakes remembrance of great things gone by.

Like music by the desolate Land's End
Mournful forgetfulness hath broken:
No more words kindred to the winds are spoken,
Where upon iron cliffs whole seas expend
That strength, whereof the unalterable token
Remains wild music, even to the world's end.

IRELAND'S DEAD

IMMEMORIAL Holy Land!
At thine hand, thy sons await
Any fate: they understand
Thee, the all compassionate.

Be it death for thee, they grieve
Nought, to leave the light aside:
Thou their pride, they undeceive
Death, by death unterrified.

Mother, dear and fair to us,
Ever thus to be adored!
Is thy sword grown timorous,
Mother of misericord?

For thy dead is grief on thee?
Can it be, thou dost repent,
That they went, thy chivalry,
Those sad ways magnificent?

What, and if their heart's blood flow?
Gladly so, with love divine,
Since not thine the overthrow,
They thy fields incarnadine.

Hearts afire with one sweet flame,
One loved name, thine host adores:
Conquerors, they overcame
Death, high Heaven's inheritors.

For their loyal love, nought less,
Than the stress of death, sufficed:
Now with Christ, in blessedness,
Triumph they, imparadised.

Mother, with so dear blood stained!
Freedom gained through love befall
Thee, by thraldom unprofaned,
Perfect and imperial!

Still the ancient voices ring:
Faith they bring, and fear repel.
Time shall tell thy triumphing,
Victress and invincible!

WAYS OF WAR

A TERRIBLE and splendid trust
Heartens the host of Inisfail:
Their dream is of the swift sword-thrust,
A lightning glory of the Gael.

Croagh Patrick is the place of prayers,
And Tara the assembling place:
But each sweet wind of Ireland bears
The trump of battle on its race.

From Dursey Isle to Donegal,
From Howth to Achill, the glad noise
Rings: and the heirs of glory fall,
Or victory crowns their fighting joys.

A dream! a dream! an ancient dream!
Yet, ere peace come to Inisfail,
Some weapons on some field must gleam,
Some burning glory fire the Gael.

That field may lie beneath the sun,
Fair for the treading of an host:
That field in realms of thought be won,
And armed minds do their uttermost:

Some way, to faithful Inisfail,
Shall come the majesty and awe
Of martial truth, that must prevail
To lay on all the eternal law.

THE RED WIND

RED Wind from out the East:
Red Wind of blight and blood!
Ah, when wilt thou have ceased
Thy bitter, stormy flood?

Red Wind from over sea,
Scourging our lonely land!
What Angel loosened thee
Out of his iron hand?

Red Wind! whose word of might
Winged thee with wings of flame?
O fire of mournful night,
What is thy master's name?

Red Wind! who bade thee burn,
Branding our hearts? Who bade
Thee on and never turn,
Till waste our souls were laid?

Red Wind! from out the West
Pour winds of Paradise:
Winds of eternal rest,
That weary souls entice.

Wind of the East! Red Wind!
Thou witherest the soft breath
Of Paradise the kind:
Red Wind of burning death!

O Red Wind! hear God's voice:
Hear thou, and fall, and cease.
Let Inisfail rejoice
In her Hesperian peace.

CHRISTMAS AND IRELAND

THE golden stars give warmthless fire,
As weary Mary goes through night:
Her feet are torn by stone and briar;
She hath no rest, no strength, no light:
O Mary, weary in the snow,
Remember Ireland's woe!

O Joseph, sad for Mary's sake!
Look on our earthly Mother too:
Let not the heart of Ireland break
With agony, the ages through:
For Mary's love, love also thou
Ireland, and save her now!

Harsh were the folk, and bitter stern,
At Bethlehem, that night of nights.
For you no cheering hearth shall burn:
We have no room here, you no rights.
O Mary and Joseph! hath not she,
Ireland, been even as ye?

The ancient David's royal house
Was thine, Saint Joseph! wherefore she,
Mary, thine Ever Virgin Spouse,

To thine own city went with thee.
Behold! thy citizens disown
The heir of David's throne!

Nay, more! The Very King of kings
Was with you, coming to his own:
They thrust Him forth to lowliest things;
The poor meek beasts of toil alone
Stood by, when came to piteous birth
The God of all the earth.

And she, our Mother Ireland, knows
Insult, and infamies of wrong:
Her innocent children clad with woes,
Her weakness trampled by the strong:
And still upon her Holy Land
Her pitiless foeman stand.

From Manger unto Cross and Crown
Went Christ: and Mother Mary passed
Through Seven Sorrows, and sat down
Upon the Angel Throne at last.
Thence, Mary! to thine own Child pray,
For Ireland's hope this day!

She wanders amid winter still,
The dew of tears is on her face:
Her wounded heart takes yet its fill

Of desolation and disgrace.
God still is God! And through God she
Foreknows her joy to be.

The snows shall perish at the spring,
The flowers pour fragrance round her feet:
Ah, Jesus! Mary! Joseph! bring
This mercy from the Mercy Seat!
Send it, sweet King of Glory, born
Humbly on Christmas Morn!

THE CHURCH OF A DREAM

SADLY the dead leaves rustle in the whistling wind,
Around the weather-worn, gray church, low down the vale:
The Saints in golden vesture shake before the gale;
The glorious windows shake, where still they dwell enshrined;
Old Saints, by long dead, shrivelled hands, long since designed:
There still, although the world autumnal be, and pale,
Still in their golden vesture the old Saints prevail;
Alone with Christ, desolate else, left by mankind.
Only one ancient priest offers the Sacrifice,
Murmuring holy Latin immemorial:
Swaying with tremulous hands the old censer full of spice,
In gray, sweet incense clouds; blue, sweet clouds mystical:
To him, in place of men, for he is old, suffice
Melancholy remembrances and vesperal.

THE AGE OF A DREAM

IMAGERIES of dreams reveal a gracious age
Black armour, falling lace, and altar lights at morn.
The courtesy of Saints, their gentleness and scorn,
Lights on an earth more fair, than shone from Plato's page:
The courtesy of knights, fair calm and sacred rage:
The courtesy of love, sorrow for love's sake borne.
Vanished, those high conceits! Desolate and forlorn,
We hunger against hope for that lost heritage.

Gone now, the carven work! Ruined, the golden shrine!
No more the glorious organs pour their voice divine;
No more rich frankincense drifts through the Holy Place:
Now from the broken tower, what solemn bell still tolls,

Mourning what piteous death? Answer, O saddened souls!
Who mourn the death of beauty and the death of grace.

CHRISTMAS

SING Bethlehem! Sing Bethlehem!
You daughters of Jerusalem!
Keep sorrow for Gethsemani,
And mourning for Mount Calvary!

Why are your lids and lashes wet?
Here is no darkling Olivet.
Sing Bethlehem! Sing Bethlehem!
You daughters of Jerusalem!

How should we sing of Bethlehem,
We, daughters of Jerusalem?
We are the people of the Jews:
Our balms would soothe Him not, but bruise.

Ah, Calvary! ah, Calvary!
We wretched women cry to thee:
We, daughters of Jerusalem;
And enemies of Bethlehem.

With faces cast upon the dust,
We weep those things, which do we must:
Our tears embitter Calvary,
And water thee, Gethsemani!

Nay, Bethlehem! Sing Bethlehem!
Poor daughters of Jerusalem!
You know not, what you do: but He
Will pardon you on Calvary.

SATANAS

ECCE! Princeps infernorum,
Rex veneficus amorum
Vilium et mortiferorum,
Ecce! regnat Lucifer:
Animis qui dominatur,
Quibus coelum spoliatur;
Qui malignus bona fatur,
Cor corrumpens suaviter.

Fructus profert; inest cinis:
Profert flores plenos spinis:
Vitae eius mors est finis:
Crux est eius requies.
Qualis illic apparebit
Cruciatus, et manebit!
Quantas ista quot habebit
Mors amaritudines!

Iuventutis quam formosa
Floret inter rosas rosa!
Venit autem vitiosa
Species infamiae:
Veniunt crudeles visus,
Voces simulati risus;
Et inutilis fit nisus
Flebilis laetitiae.

Quanto vitium splendescit,
Tanto anima nigrescit;
Tanto tandem cor marcescit,
Per peccata dulcia.
Gaudens mundi Princeps mali
Utitur veneno tali,
Voluptate Avernali;
O mellita vitia!

Gaudet Princeps huius mundi
Videns animam confundi;
Cordis amat moribundi
Aspectare proelium.
Vana tentat, vana quaerens,
Cor anhelum, frustra moerens;
Angit animae inhaerens
Flamma cor miserrimum.

Gaudet Rector tenebrarum
Immolare cor amarum;
Satiare Furiarum
Rex sorores avidas.
Vae! non stabit in aeternum
Regnum, ait Rex, infernum:
Sed, dum veniat Supernum,
Dabo vobis victimas.

IESU COR

QUID, Cor Iesu vulneratum!
Peccatorem me amasti?
Iesu mei Cor amatum,
Cur pro me Te vulnerasti?
Quare mihi Te indigno
Prodidisti Te in ligno?

Angelorum Te in coelis
Collaudabant sanctae voces:
Trucibus Tu volens telis
Innocenti Tibi noces:
O quam miris illecebris
Me vocasti e tenebris!

Tuas meos in amores
Ta agonias mutasti:
Et purpureos in flores
Tua vulnera formasti:
Sanguinisque Tui fontes
Animas perfundunt sontes.

Iesu coronatum spinis
Cor! peccati mei fiat
Et doloris Tui finis:
Meum cor Te solum sciat.
Hominis Tu Cor et Dei:
Cor Tu Salvatoris mei.

TE MARTYRUM CANDIDATUS

AH, see the fair chivalry come, the companions of Christ!
White Horsemen, who ride on white horses, the Knights of God!
They, for their Lord and their Lover who sacrificed
All, save the sweetness of treading, where He first trod!

These through the darkness of death, the dominion of night,
Swept, and they woke in white places at morning tide:
They saw with their eyes, and sang for joy at the sight,
They saw with their eyes the Eyes of the Crucified.

Now, whithersoever He goeth, with Him they go:
White Horsemen, who ride on white horses, oh fair to see!
They ride, where the Rivers of Paradise flash and flow,
White Horsemen, with Christ their Captain: for ever He!

THE DARK ANGEL

DARK Angel, with thine aching lust
To rid the world of penitence:
Malicious Angel, who still dost
My soul such subtile violence!

Because of thee, no thought, no thing,
Abides for me undesecrate:
Dark Angel, ever on the wing,
Who never reachest me too late!

When music sounds, then changest thou
Its silvery to a sultry fire:
Nor will thine envious heart allow
Delight untortured by desire.

Through thee, the gracious Muses turn
To Furies, O mine Enemy!
And all the things of beauty burn
With flames of evil ecstasy.

Because of thee, the land of dreams
Becomes a gathering place of fears:
Until tormented slumber seems
One vehemence of useless tears.

When sunlight glows upon the flowers,
Or ripples down the dancing sea:
Thou, with thy troop of passionate powers,
Beleaguerest, bewilderest, me.

Within the breath of autumn woods,
Within the winter silences:
Thy venomous spirit stirs and broods,
O Master of impieties!

The ardour of red flame is thine,
And thine the steely soul of ice:
Thou poisonest the fair design
Of nature, with unfair device.

Apples of ashes, golden bright;
Waters of bitterness, how sweet!
O banquet of a foul delight,
Prepared by thee, dark Paraclete!

Thou art the whisper in the gloom,
The hinting tone, the haunting laugh:
Thou art the adorner of my tomb,
The minstrel of mine epitaph.

I fight thee, in the Holy Name!
Yet, what thou dost, is what God saith:
Tempter! should I escape thy flame,
Thou wilt have helped my soul from Death:

The second Death, that never dies,
That cannot die, when time is dead:
Live Death, wherein the lost soul cries,
Eternally uncomforted.

Dark Angel, with thine aching lust!
Of two defeats, of two despairs:
Less dread, a change to drifting dust,
Than thine eternity of cares.

Do what thou wilt, thou shalt not so,
Dark Angel! triumph over me:
Lonely, unto the Lone I go;
Divine, to the Divinity.

VII ADDITIONAL POEMS

PLATO IN LONDON

THE pure flame of one taper fall
Over the old and comely page:
No harsher light disturb at all
This converse with a treasured sage.
Seemly, and fair, and of the best,
If Plato be our guest,
Should things befall.

Without, a world of noise and cold:
Here, the soft burning of the fire.
And Plato walks, where heavens unfold,
About the home of his desire.
From his own city of high things,
He shows to us, and brings,
Truth of fine gold.

The hours pass; and the fire burns low;
The clear flame dwindles into death:

Shut then the book with care; and so,
Take leave of Plato, with hushed breath:
A little, by the falling gleams,
    Tarry the gracious dreams:
    And they too go.

Lean from the window to the air:
Hear London's voice upon the night!
Thou hast bold converse with things rare:
Look now upon another sight!
The calm stars, in their living skies:
    And then, these surging cries,
    This restless glare!

That starry music, starry fire,
High above all our noise and glare:
The image of our long desire,
The beauty, and the strength, are there.
And Plato's thought lives, true and clear,
    In as august a sphere:
    Perchance, far higher.

THE CLASSICS

FAIN to know golden things, fain to grow wise,
Fain to achieve the secret of fair souls:
His thought, scarce other lore need solemnize,
Whom Virgil calms, whom Sophocles controls:

Whose conscience Æschylus, a warrior voice,
Enchaunted hath with majesties of doom:
Whose melancholy mood can best rejoice,
When Horace sings, and roses bower the tomb:

Who, following Caesar unto death, discerns
What bitter cause was Rome's, to mourn that day:
With austere Tacitus for master, learns
The look of empire in its proud decay:

Whom dread Lucretius of the mighty line
Hath awed, but not borne down: who loves the flame,
That leaped within Catullus the divine,
His glory, and his beauty, and his shame:

Who dreams with Plato and, transcending dreams,
Mounts to the perfect City of true God:
Who hails its marvellous and haunting gleams,
Treading the steady air, as Plato trod:

Who with Thucydides pursues the way,
Feeling the heart-beats of the ages gone:
Till fall the clouds upon the Attic day,
And Syracuse draw tears from Marathon:

To whom these golden things best give delight:
The music of most sad Simonides;
Propertius' ardent graces; and the might
Of Pindar chaunting by the olive trees:

Livy, and Roman consuls purple swathed:
Plutarch, and heroes of the ancient earth:
And Aristophanes, whose laughter scathed
The souls of fools, and pealed in lyric mirth:

Æolian rose-leaves blown from Sappho's isle;
Secular glories of Lycean thought:
Sallies of Lucian, bidding wisdom smile;
Angers of Juvenal, divinely wrought:

Pleasant, and elegant, and garrulous,
Pliny: crowned Marcus, wistful and still strong:
Sicilian seas and their Theocritus,
Pastoral singer of the last Greek song:

Herodotus, all simple and all wise:
Demosthenes, a lightning flame of scorn:
The surge of Cicero, that never dies:
And Homer, grand against the ancient morn.

WALTER PATER

GRACIOUS God rest him, he who toiled so well
Secrets of grace to tell
Graciously; as the awed rejoicing priest
Officiates at the feast,
Knowing, how deep within the liturgies
Lie hid the mysteries.
Half of a passionately pensive soul
He showed us, not the whole:
Who loved him best, they best, they only, knew
The deeps, they might not view;
That, which was private between God and him;
To others, justly dim.
Calm Oxford autumns and preluding springs!
To me your memory brings
Delight upon delight, but chiefest one;
The thought of Oxford's son,
Who gave me of his welcome and his praise,
When white were still my days;
Ere death had left life darkling, nor had sent
Lament upon lament;
Ere sorrow told me, how I loved my lost,
And bade me base love's cost.

Scholarship's constant saint, he kept her light
In him divinely white:
With cloistral jealousness of ardour strove
To guard her sacred grove,
Inviolate by unworldly feet, nor paced
In desecrating haste.
Oh, sweet grave smiling of that wisdom, brought
From arduous ways of thought;
Oh, golden patience of that travailing soul,
So hungered for the goal,
And vowed to keep, through subtly vigilant pain,
From pastime on the plain;
Enamoured of the difficult mountain air
Up beauty's Hill of Prayer!
Stern is the faith of art, right stern, and he
Loved her severity.
Momentous things he prized, gradual and fair,
Births of a passionate air:
Some austere setting of an ancient sun,
Its midday glories done,
Over a silent melancholy sea
In sad serenity:
Some delicate dawning of a new desire,
Distilling fragrant fire
On hearts of men prophetically fain
To feel earth young again:
Some strange rich passage of the dreaming earth,
Fulfilled with warmth and worth.

Ended, his service: yet, albeit farewell
Tolls the faint vesper bell,
Patient beneath his Oxford trees and towers
He still is gently ours:
Hierarch of the spirit, pure and strong,
Worthy Uranian song.
Gracious God keep him: and God grant to me
By miracle to see
That unforgettably most gracious friend,
In the never-ending end.

SORTES VIRGILIANAE

LORD of the Golden Branch, Virgil! and
Caesar's friend:
Leader of pilgrim Dante! Yes: *things have
their tears:*
So sighed thy song, when down sad winds
pierced to thine ears
Wandering and immemorial sorrows without
end.
And things of death touch hearts, that die:
Yes: but joys blend,
And glories, with our little life of human fears:
Rome reigns, and Caesar triumphs! Ah, the
Golden Years,
The Golden Years return: this also the Gods
send.

O men, who have endured an heavier burden yet!
Hear you not happy airs, and voices augural?
For you, in these last days by sure foreknowl-
edge set,
Looms no Italian shore, bright and imperial?
Wounded and worn! What Virgil sang, doth
God forget?
Virgil, the melancholy, the majestical.

BELLS

FROM far away! from far away!
But whence, you will not say:
Melancholy bells, appealing chimes,
Voices of lands and times!

Your toll, O melancholy bells!
Over the valley swells:
O touching chimes! your dying sighs
Travel our tranquil skies.

But whence? And whither fade away
Your echoes from our day?
You take our hearts with gentle pain,
Tremble, and pass again.

Could we lay hold upon your haunts,
The birthplace of your chaunts:
Were we in dreamland, deathland, then?
We, sad and wondering men?

BEYOND

ALL was for you: and you are dead.
For, came there sorrow, came there splendour,
You still were mine, and I yours only:
Then on my breast lay down your head,
Triumphant in its dear surrender:
One were we then: though one, not lonely.

Oh, is it you are dead, or I?
Both! both dead, since we are asunder:
You, sleeping: I, for ever walking
Through the dark valley, hard and dry.
At times I hear the mourning thunder:
And voices, in the shadows, talking.

Dear, are there dreams among the dead:
Or is it all a perfect slumber?
But I must dream and dream to madness.
Mine eyes are dark, now yours are fled:
Yet see they sorrows without number,
Waiting upon one perfect sadness.

So long, the melancholy vale!
So full, these weary winds, of sorrow!
So harsh, all things! For what counts pity?
Still, as each twilight glimmers pale
Upon the borders of each morrow,
I near me to your sleeping city.

TRENTALS

NOW these lovers twain be dead,
And together buried:
Masses only shall be said.
Hush thee, weary melancholy!
Music comes, more rich and holy:
Through the aged church shall sound
Words, by ancient prophets found;
Burdens in an ancient tongue,
By the fasting Mass-priest sung.

Gray, without, the autumn air:
But pale candles here prepare,
Pale as wasted golden hair.
Let the quire with mourning descant
Cry: *In pace requiescant!*
For they loved the things of God.
Now, where solemn feet have trod,
Sleep they well: and wait the end,
Lover by lover, friend by friend.

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